

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

This Document contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States, within the meaning of Title 18, Sections 793 and 794, of the U.S. Code, as amended. Its transmission or revelation of its contents to or receipt by an unauthorized person is prohibited by law. The reproduction of this form is prohibited.

SECRET/CONTROL-U.S.OFFICIALS ONLY

COUNTRY Poland
SUBJECT Berling's Army

REPORT NO. 25X1

DATE DISTR. 20 March 1954 25X1

NO. OF PAGES 2 25X1

25X1 DATE OF INFO. REQUIREMENT NO. PLACE ACQUIRED REFERENCES

THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

25X1

1. Following the 1941 Sikorski-Molotov Amnesty Agreement, when General Anders and his army left the USSR, the Union of Polish Patriots was organized under Soviet auspices. The union was an all-Communist organization from whose ranks the First Division of the Berling Army was formed. The cadres of the First Division were mainly Soviets, Ukrainians and a nondescript assortment of Russian-speaking Poles. As a fighting unit, the Berling Army was Soviet; politically, it was a Polish Communist organization. Most of its leaders were Communist escapees who crossed Poland's eastern border into the USSR when the Polish drive against Communists was intensified in 1937-38. Berling himself was only a figurehead in the Army; he played no major role.
2. The Berling Army fought its first battle in the Lenino (Smolensk) area during which about one-third of the First Division was wiped out. After this, the First Division was exposed only to light skirmishes in order to protect its ranks for post-war use in Poland and also to uphold its prestige as a fighting unit. From its inception, it was considered an elite reserve group from which politically reliable elements could be chosen for important Party posts in Soviet-occupied Poland. Shortly after the Berling Army was formed, Wanda Wasilewska appeared on the front lines from time to time. She faded out of the picture as soon as Soviet forces crossed the Bug River.
3. In 1944, the First Division became a corps and a strong drive for volunteers was launched. Promotions were then handed out freely and it was expected that the corps would constitute the foundation for the future Polish Army.
4. During the Gomulka-Spychalski period, a liberal enlistment policy was introduced to permit pre-war Polish Army regulars to join because there was an urgent need

SECRET/CONTROL-U.S.OFFICIALS ONLY

STATE	X	ARMY	X	NAVY	X	AIR	X	FBI		AEC									
-------	---	------	---	------	---	-----	---	-----	--	-----	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

SECRET/CONTROL-U.S.OFFICIALS ONLY

- 2 -

for military specialists. When Gomulka was purged, a general halt was called to all promotions and enlistments. After the Tatar trials, a drive was begun to purge professional officers who were in the army before the war. At present, most ranking officers in the Polish Army are of Soviet origin. Few of these officers are known; some are obviously of Soviet origin, having been recruited for service in the Polish Army after learning the Polish language.

SECRET/CONTROL-U.S.OFFICIALS ONLY